

John McDonald Disproves Myths About Black Business

Some 150 black organizations spend \$3 billion each summer holding annual meetings in white hotels, discussing white racism and black poverty.

The most recent example was the so-called "Black Summit" in New Orleans at, of course, a white hotel to discuss an "agenda" which will then be forwarded to President George Bush for his approval and executive action.

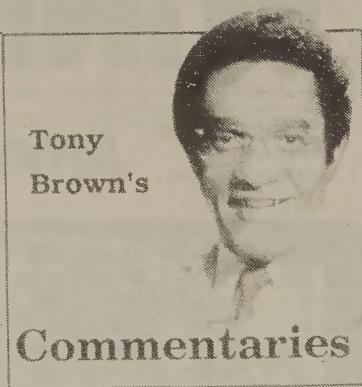
If the inconsistencies in both of the above, do not jump out at you, you might save yourself some time by reading the comics instead of reading further. The excuse that there are no black-owned hotels will also be put to the test.

It won't be the acid test because we still don't own one major hotel in America. But John

McDonald, a black man who has operated the famous McDonald's Cafeteria in Charlotte, North Carolina for years, has opened a mini-major, \$3 million hotel, appropriately called the Best Western McDonald's Inn.

Now that McDonald and his wife, Eunice, have succeeded, after years of saving and hard work, in opening one of the finest hotels in the state, they must now convince a biased black community that they can compete (if they were white, many of us would accept them on face value).

Therefore, let me review my experience at McDonald's Inn. First, I was in Charlotte speaking at Johnson C. Smith University, a bulwark of black education in that state, and at the suggestion of my host at the



Tony Brown's

Commentaries

school, I checked into McDonald's Inn.

A brand new building with 105 rooms, appointed with all of the latest electronic gadgets -- remote control TV, climate control, AM-FM radios -- gave me

my second impression. My first impression came from a warm, friendly staff. So much for our perennial complaint that we are not courteous to one another; some of us aren't but they don't work at this Buy Freedom business.

I rented a suite and paid one-fourth what it would have cost in New York (where the quality of the room would have been as good) and one-half what it would have cost in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Houston, Los Angeles, or probably where you live.

Speaking of prices, I went to the cafeteria and saw a man order ham, bacon, grits, two eggs, toast, cooked apples and orange juice and pay \$2.71, if my memory is correct. In a New York hotel, you would have needed a credit card and a co-signer to pay the bill.

Although I had made plans to

visit the intimate cocktail lounge after I returned from Johnson C. Smith, I got back too late to testify to the quality of the "spirits." But I'm sure they're up to par.

If you get the impression that I'm trying to sell you on a visit to McDonald's Inn, you're correct. I want us to learn to respect one another and to spend with one another (which follows respecting one another) the way we respect and spend with everybody but one another.

Many of us who are black share white-racist views of ourselves -- which contributes greatly to our spending 95 percent of our money with non-blacks. However, the McDonalds have taken the racist excuses away from us.

You can't say these blacks are not courteous. You can't say the prices are too high. And you can't say the parking is too ex-

pensive -- because it's free.

But don't take my word for it, call the McDonald's Inn TOLL FREE. That's right, call 1-800-456-9797 and have a brochure sent to you, get room rates or groups rates or ask about the jacuzzi, conference rooms, exercise room -- or make a reservation.

Or ask how you can spend some of that \$3 billion within a Buy Freedom hotel business that your group normally spends with non-blacks that will keep all of McDonald's employees employed and employ some others who are unemployed -- and will remain so until we stay at a McDonald's Inn somewhere.

TONY BROWN'S JOURNAL TV series can be seen on public television Sunday on Channel 42 at 5 p.m. It can also be seen on Saturday on Channel 58 at 1:30 p.m. Please consult listings.

Unemployment "Crackin'" Up Youth

Guest Editorial
By CHARLES E. BELLE
NNPA Business Editor

"We spent \$50 on a \$50 double-up (five rocks or coke). You can make \$100 on 5 rocks of cocaine -- each one worth \$20.00." Tim Hawks, 16, THE CRISIS. "Cocaine is a business that allows turning \$1 million of a raw material into \$5 billion of revenue," says Richard W. Held, Agent-in-charge, San Francisco Bay Area, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Furthermore, it is in all aspects of American society not just low income, African American neighborhoods. Nice, white couples who earn in excess of \$150,000 a year have had their lives ruined by using cocaine's derivative "crack," according to Held.

He and other law enforcement officers are helpless without the support of sincere citizens to clean up the drug traffic in America. A call for help by Held was issued in front of a 99.9 percent pure white audience at the regular Friday luncheon meet-

ing of the Commonwealth Club of California in San Francisco. Obviously, drugs are a national disgrace dealing at its base on nearly a decade of unemployed African American youth.

It is a known fact from readers of this column to the White House that there has been nearly 50 percent unemployment of African American youth during Ronald Reagan's two terms of office in this country. Conditions which cocaine traffickers took full advantage of to get a foothold in the lucrative American drug market. Money is being paid to "kids" at 12-years of age or less to be "runners" for \$150 per day plus a new car, while President Bush is pushing for less than decent minimum wage of under \$5.00 an hour.

The illegal drug business is big in the African American youth community because it offers what on the surface appears to be a better paying job. What's more, at the moment, the immediate superior is also an African American-gang boss. These

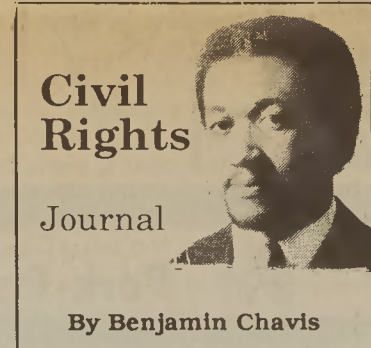
"kids," armed with AK47 automatic rifles, run their own flourishing death trade. To try and take it away from them without giving something other than a jail sentence is silly!

Sensible and constructive job training programs have to be put back on the books by the President with an affirmative action executive order and not a moment too soon. Slaughter of themselves and other "mushrooms," foreign objects that pop up and get popped away, will eventually spill over into the whole society. Since drug-related crimes already claim a third of the cause of total crimes, it is creeping around the corner. Cutting the outrageously high understated African American youth unemployment rate is the battle for Bush. Believing that a two-thirds white male police force in most major U.S. cities can stop the cocaine crack business is not only "kinder" dumb, but dangerous to the health of the nation.

Abolish The Death Penalty Now

Amnesty International has been joined by hundreds of human rights groups throughout the world in the recent launching of a new international campaign against the death penalty. Here in the United States, the issue of capital punishment continues to be hotly debated. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the Commission for Racial Justice and numerous other civil rights and human rights organizations in the United States have long argued against the death penalty.

John G. Healey, executive director of Amnesty International, USA, stated, "The death penalty is a human rights violation. It is cruel and degrading. It is barbaric and should be stopped immediately." In a 268-page report that details how and why the death penalty is applied worldwide, Amnesty International concluded that in many nations the death penalty is used "for blatant political reasons and/or disproportionately against the poor or racial and ethnic minorities." Since 1979 it is estimated that more than 40,000 women, men, and even in some cases children have been officially executed in some 90 different nations as a result of the imposition of the death pen-



Civil Rights Journal

By Benjamin Chavis

alty. In the United States the report cites statistics that "86 percent of prisoners on death row in 1987 have been convicted of killing whites. Forty-five of the 98 prisoners executed between January 1987 and May 1988 were black or Hispanic and 98 percent of them have been convicted of killing whites." Capital punishment in the United States has been rarely imposed when the victim was an African American or Hispanic. Because of racism, the values of the lives of the victims of crime and violence is socially determined by race and socio-economic circumstances. The point here is, however, not the color of the race of the victim or of the accused. The issue is that the im-

position of the death penalty is immoral and unjust in any situation. The state does not create life and the state does not have the right to take life.

Although African Americans today are approximately 15 percent of this nation's population, African Americans comprise 41 percent of those on death row. Hispanics, Native Americans, and other racial and ethnic communities also disproportionately are sentenced to death.

In those states where capital punishment has been made legal, the argument that the death penalty is a deterrent to crime has failed. In fact, there has been a gradual increase in the murder rate in those states where the death penalty is routinely imposed. We, in the United States, should join the international campaign to abolish the death penalty by first taking this action here. The Supreme Court of the United States needs to be petitioned, and the death penalty should be outlawed. But, of course, the present members of the Supreme Court would only take such a vote in the wake of a national public outcry against this type of inhumane cruelty and barbarity.

What It Takes To Improve Our Schools

Guest Editorial
by MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

We know that many public schools serving the black community, especially those in low-income neighborhoods, are not as good as our children deserve. Many classrooms are overcrowded. Halls are often unsafe. Teachers are often overwhelmed by the burdens of their job.

Improving our schools is a big task, with plenty of work for everyone. Government must invest more resources in our schools. Communities must do more to support them. And parents too can play an important role in improving their children's school experience. Here are seven different ways you can contribute:

- **Get Involved in School Functions.** Visit your school on "Parent Night." Become an active member of your school's PTA. Help out with the graduation ceremony, or with other school activities such as basketball games, concerts, and plays.
- **Volunteer An Hour of Teaching.** Devote an hour of your time

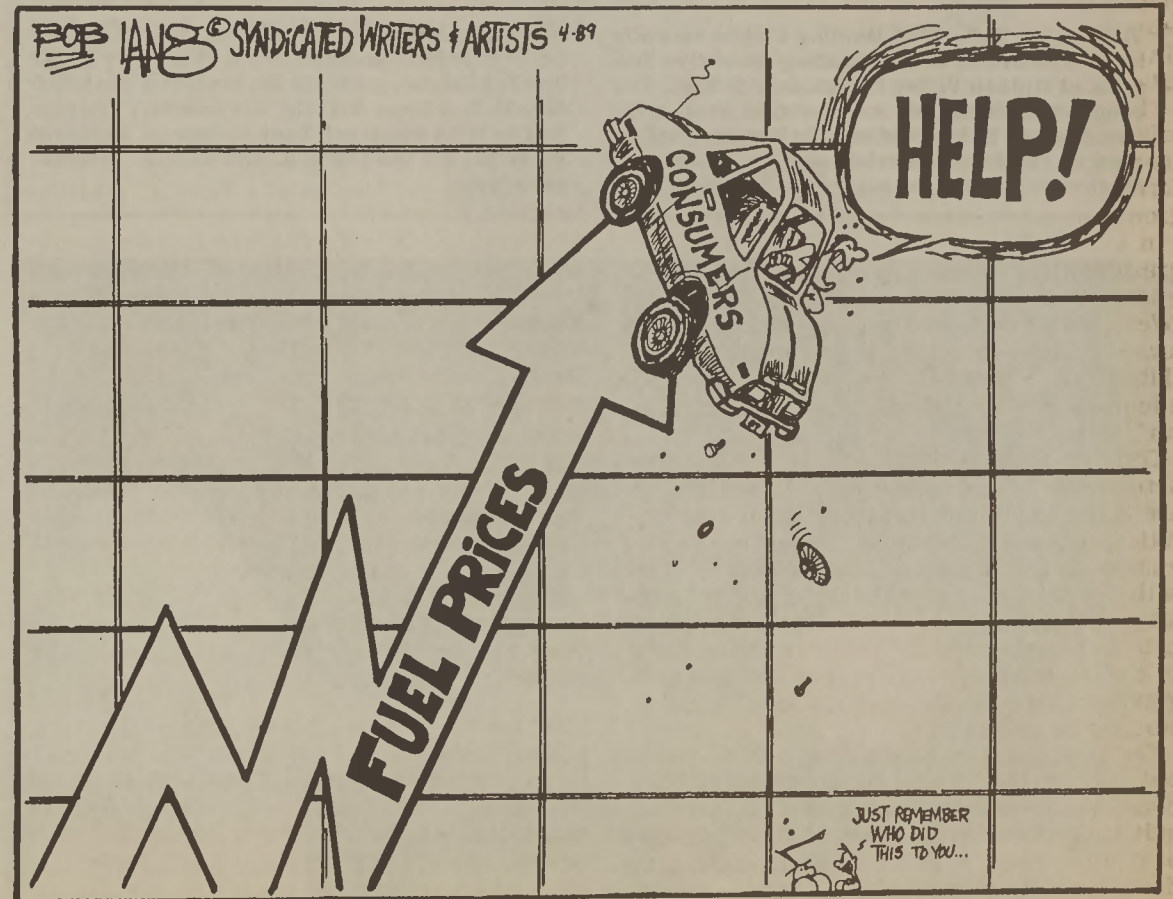
every week to tutoring children who need extra help. Pick a subject you're especially good at. Talk to one of the teachers to find out which students need your help.

- **Get to know the School Staff.** Find out who your children's teachers are, and make a point of getting to know them personally. Working together, you can do a lot to help your children learn better. Another key person to know is the school counselor. He or she can give you special insights into the school and the teachers and can help you work with your child to overcome any problems that crop up.
- **Help Raise Funds for Your School.** Work with other parents, teachers, and students on holding a fundraising event such as a carnival. These events are fun and can help raise the funds schools desperately need to improve learning facilities.
- **Help Make Travel to School as Safe as Possible.** Check to make sure your school has all of the traffic signs and crosswalks youngsters need to arrive safely. Small children (kindergarten to

second grade) should have bus service if they live more than a few blocks from the school. Talk to the principal if they do not.

- **Be Politically Aware and Involved.** Learn who is serving on your local school board. Find out if they are doing a good job for your children. Attend public meetings and follow school board news in your local paper. Most important, vote on your convictions.
- **Keep Your Child Learning at Home.** Ask your children which lessons they enjoyed today and which they did not. Help them identify and cope with any problems. Take an interest in their homework, and encourage them to try harder. All of these actions send them the signal that you think school is very important.

Marian Wright Edelman is President of the Children's Defense Fund, a national voice for children. The CDC is located at 122 C Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001.



Letters To The Post

Raleigh Knows Not What He Speaks

Dear Editor:

As a graduate of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System and former PTA Chairman and long time resident (over 45 years) of Charlotte Mecklenburg, I became very disturbed while watching Channel 36, WPCQ, on May 19, 1989.

During the weather report, weatherman Mr. Steve Raleigh, noted that he had visited Billingsville Elementary school. The anchor, Tom Miller, asked Mr. Raleigh whether or not the students (at Billingsville) were smart. Mr. Raleigh commented that these students were "more enthusiastic than smart."

One wonders what discussion had taken place between these two news people prior to this question. Would this question or answer have been given had the school been Charlotte Latin, Providence Day, etc.?

Billingsville Elementary is a school located in east Charlotte in an area known as Griertown that happens to be predominantly black. To have the intelligence of these students questioned by a weatherman is rather unsettling to me, as if being a member of MENSA was a prerequisite for being a weatherman.

A call was made to Mr. Raleigh who was cordial but not

aware of the potential harm of his statement. On the 11 p.m. news, Mr. Raleigh once again spoke of visiting Billingsville. This time he referred to the students as a "good group." One wonders if this is the same group he referred to earlier.

If this was meant as a retraction, it deserves a Harris rating, as in C.C., of minus ten. Hopefully Mr. Raleigh will confine future remarks to areas of "alleged" expertise such as barometric pressure, temperature (as in hot air) and wind velocity.

C.C. HARRIS

A Dream Of Blacks Against Drugs

Dear Editor:

Many times it has been stated that I am a person who is critical of the black leadership. It is true that I have stated that most of our leaders do not care one way or another about the welfare of our people.

But I had a dream that black pastors united as a part of Drug and Violence Awareness Week and spoke as one. Black

leaders took to the streets walking in the low income areas telling the people, "we care." Every hour on the hour, black radio stations carried a message against drugs and violence. The war on drugs in the black community was started by first a call for peace among the leadership. Black men took their places as role models. For the first time in years, drug use in the black commu-

nity was down. All because the community united.

While this was only a dream, it is one I plan to work to see come true. We must win the war on drugs or drugs will destroy us.

Where is the leadership of the black community?

JAMES E. BARNETT

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

Let us hear your comments, ideas and opinions. Write to:

Letters To The Post
P.O. Box 30144
Charlotte, N.C. 28230

Please include name, address and phone number. We edit letters for clarity and grammar.

Perspective

"More and more independent black scholars are coming to see the civil rights approach as having already done its work, and now needing to be superseded by new approaches to other serious problems of the black community --- of which massive teenage pregnancy and violent crime are among the most devastating. Yet, however intellectually correct these scholars may be, politics runs on other fuel."

--- Economist Thomas Sowell, *Issues & Views*, January/February 1988